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597 736 Ignorant of his ancestral names, and lacking the means to validate them even if someone should tell them to him, owning no hunting-grounds, the unfortunate infant is little better than a slave. This is almost unthinkable except in the extremely rare contingency of a child being left without relatives.

Although public opinion does not impel kindly treatment to orphans left without kindred, yet many Bella Coola have charitable dispositions and it is not unknown for a family to adopt and tend an infant without reason or hope of reward. One old man mentioned how his mother and a Chilkotin child had been born on the same day when a party of the latter had been encamped near *Nusqalst*. A few days later they left for the interior, abandoning the infant. The grandfather of the old man chanced to pass their camp while the ashes of their fire were still warm and found the baby, whom he brought back, to be a brother to his own daughter. His wife suckled the two, giving each a breast, and treating the foundling as her own. When the boy grew into manhood, he went back to his own people, but never forgot his adopted parents. Forty years later he visited Bella Coola, bringing with him his own wife and family. The old man who related this incident recalled the manner in which the Chilkotin had instructed his children to regard him as their brother.

597 [768] Children are not the only persons to be adopted. On the death of an adult his relatives may "adopt to replace" someone who has a striking facial resemblance to the deceased. Thus, some time after the death of his sister, a certain man was in Bella Bella and saw a Bella Bella woman who closely resembled her. He desired to adopt her, and since he was a man of importance, his wish was granted. To legalize the transaction [431] he distributed valuable presents among the Bella Bella. A person so adopted does not usually change his abode, nor does [601] he lose membership in his own family; instead, he becomes a [835] member of two, with full rights to names and prerogatives in both, is addressed with the same kinship terms as if related by blood, and is likewise considered a member of the family as far as incest rules are concerned.

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595 556 two, but only one of great importance could hope to aspire to more, while the case of *Potles* was considered to be unique and highly desirable.

595 578 A chief's wives always lived in the same house, and it is said that disputes were frequent. *Potles* endeavoured to prevent jealousy by providing each woman with a special bedroom and sleeping for a single night with each in order. One informant had two wives when a young man, and he found that the only way to avoid constant bickering was by sleeping in one bed, between them. The evidence seems clear that plurality of wives was usually the cause of considerable friction, though this never deterred a man from taking a second wife if he could. The only special rule of incest in [835] [582] this regard was that two sisters could not be married at the same time.

595 183 626 In answer to questions about polyandry, two men told of a licentious woman who had two feeble-minded husbands between whom she used to sleep. The whole affair was considered disgusting, but public opinion did not ostracize the offenders since a person's marital affairs were considered to concern the individual only. It was accordingly assumed that 595 556 the institution of true polyandry did not exist, when, unexpectedly, information was volunteered about its occurrence in the families of influential men. A very powerful chief, if his only child was a daughter, quite frequently married her simultaneously to the sons of other chiefs. She was thus considered most fortunate, since only a wealthy man could provide for a daughter in this way, and expend the large quantities of goods necessary to ensure her proper marriage in each case. The husbands were never brothers, and seldom related, since the ambitious parent wished to ally his daughter with different ancestral families for the benefit of any resultant children. The joint wife was accustomed to live for a number of months in the home of one of her husbands, with her other husbands forming part of his household. She would then move to the house of another, who assumed the leadership of the group,

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to force his attentions on a slave woman if she objected, although her refusal would be most unusual on account of his prestige. There were no professional prostitutes; a man usually gave a small present to a girl from whom he had received favours, and she was expected to give him a little, dainty basket filled with undyed cedar-bark to use as a sponge. Such relations appear always to have been of common occurrence. Today, as formerly, a man's morality is considered to be his own affair; laxity may lower his prestige, but no law is broken, and his neighbours laugh and chaff him about it. In fact, sexual matters are discussed with the greatest freedom, and a person who has been caught is mocked mercilessly. When visiting a foreign tribe, a man sometimes lives with a woman and, on parting, composes and sings a song describing her charms. One man did this after living with a Kitlobe woman, and on his return to Bella Coola found that some of his fellows had learnt it in some unexplained manner; they used to sing it to him, much to their amusement, in part to his own, and somewhat to the annoyance of his wife. This perhaps illustrates rather clearly the attitude of the Bella Coola to an infraction of morality—where no marriage rite has been broken; it is amusing rather than disgusting. There are no times when the moral code ceases to function. At potlatches, and also at *kusiut* dances, there appears always to have been a certain amount of laxity, although this was strictly prohibited within the house where the ceremony was taking place. Such behaviour is due to the excitement and stimulus of a large gathering, not to anything connected with the rites themselves.

Perverted sexual desires, like other matters connected with the relations of the sexes, are regarded as concerning the individual alone. Sodomy appears to be unknown. Intercourse by pre-adolescents is held to be disgusting, but carries with it no social ostracism. Incestuous union, however, is mildly anti-social; it exposes the offender to secret contempt, but does not interfere with his attainment of whatever position his wealth

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and influence may have won for him. One or two instances are known of contact between parent and child, a matter in which it is the duty of no one to interfere; if a person thus flouts public opinion, it is his own affair.

In view of the firmness of the marriage bond and the absence of professional prostitutes, it is difficult to explain the wholesale exodus of Bella Coola women to Victoria in the last century. In some peculiar manner this came to be regarded as socially proper. The daughters both of chiefs and commoners trooped off for a varying period of months or years and those who returned brought back venereal diseases which appear to have been unknown before that date. Few of them bore children afterwards, a factor of prime importance in estimating the reasons for the decline of the Bella Coola. The motives which led the women to the city seem to have been: (1) the desire for wealth; (2) the influence of strong liquor; (3) the lure of a strange environment; (4) the attraction of the white men, on account of their higher culture.

It is fortunate for the Bella Coola that this fatal custom has ceased to be considered estimable, although the harm already done may be irremediable.